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ABSTRACT

This document contains three papers from a symposium on linking human resource development (HRD) theory and practice that was conducted as part of a conference on HRD. "Development towards What End? An Analysis of the Notion of Development for the Field of Human Resource Development" (F. Peter Kuchinke) examines the following alternative views of adult development that can serve to distinguish competing schools of thought regarding the theory and practice of HRD: the person-centered view (which aims at self-realization of the individual); the production-centered view (which focuses on organizational goals); and the view of development as principled problem solving. "A Study of the Influence of the Theoretical Foundations of Human Resource Development on Research and Practice" (Tim Hatcher) reports on a study that surveyed researchers and practitioners in the HRD academic community to determine which theoretical foundations are and will be influencing the field and which foundations are and will be most important in research and practice. "Clarifying and Defining the Performance Paradigm of Human Resource Development" (Elwood F. Holton III) proposes a definition of the performance paradigm of HRD, discusses 11 core assumptions of the paradigm, and refutes criticisms of the paradigm. All three papers contain substantial bibliographies. (MN)

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2000 AHRD Conference

Linking HRD Theory and Practice

Symposium 2

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Development Towards What End? An Analysis of the Notion of Development for the Field of Human Resource Development

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The research, theory, and practice of the field of Human Resource Development are based on often unspoken assumptions about the concept of adult development. Examining these assumptions is useful to researchers and practitioners because of the possibility of more deliberate choices and improved scholarship and professional practice. Three alternative views of adult development can serve to distinguish competing schools of thought, each rooted in different philosophical traditions and political thought. The person-centered view aims at self-realization of the individual and is grounded in humanistic psychology and liberalism; the production-centered view focuses on organizational goals and is based on behaviorism and libertarianism; and the definition of development as principled problem-solving in cognitive psychology, progressivism, and pragmatism. Each view serves as a root construct for a specific orientation toward the role and function of the profession. By highlighting the differences between these views and their relative strengths and shortcomings, the author seeks to advance the theoretical foundation of the field and to contribute to more reasoned theory and practice in the field.

Keywords: Philosophy of HRD, Human Development,HRD Theory

Paradigmatic debates are still rare in the field of Human Resource Development (HRD) that is relatively young and concerned with gaining and expanding its academic legitimacy relative to the established fields of adult education, vocational education, and the array of management and organizational sciences. The practice of HRD is firmly established, with US organizations expending over $200 billion per year on HRD interventions (Training, 1997) and an exceedingly vibrant training and consulting industry operating in this country and abroad. Still, there are continued calls for more and better research and recommendations for practice to keep up with the pace of technical, political, economic, and social changes that organizations face in this global economy.

As an academic matter, HRD programs are now firmly established in US graduate schools. HRD enrollments are among the fastest growing in Schools of Education, where the 'training of ...HRD professionals is now the bread and butter'activity"(Gray, 1997, p. 80). Here, paradigm debates can deepen theory and provide the foundation for new research.

What philosophical debates exist in HRD have centered on whether professional HRD activities should promote 'performance' or 'learning'. Swanson and Watkins argued this issue during the profession's annual conference in 1995, (Holton, 1995), Dirkx juxtaposed earning and learning in discussing the meaning of work, and Barrie and Pace (1998) argued passionately for the adoption of a liberal education framework for the HRD profession. The learning focus is most prominently advanced by those adult education scholars, who claim HRD as an area of practice (Dirkx, 1997). More recently, Kuchinke (1998) has attempted to reconcile these perspectives by using a progressive learning philosophy. Other attempts to comprehend and classify different directions in the field include Russ-Eft's (1996) work identifying three different views of HRD held by consultants and organizations: development-focused, issue-linked, and strategic. Lewis (1996) described a "model for thinking about training evaluation" (p. 3) that differentiated training along several context, process, and outcome factor dimensions and classified it as either proactive or reactive. Watkins (1989) described five alternative metaphors for the HRD professional: organizational problem solver, change agent, designer, empowerer, and developer of human capital.

No attempt, however, has been made to analyze the field in terms of its understanding of 'development', a concept so centrally positioned in the name of the profession. What HRD professionals view— implicitly or explicitly— as the purpose and end of developmental activities that persons in organizations engage in, gives rise to very different models of HRD. Since HRD is an applied field and, therefore concerned with practical problems—

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deciding what to do and what action to take (Copa, 1985)— HRD professionals address not only what is, but predominantly what should be. Reasoned practice depends on reflective choice of the ends or purposes of action, and it is at this normative level that the distinction between different views of HRD become most salient and revealing. Should HRD practice aim at the well-being of the individual worker, as Bjorquist and Lewis (1992) argued, or should the interests of the shareholders predominate, as Friedman (1970) advocated? Should HRD aim solely at responding to business needs and corporate goals as identified by senior management, as Rummler and Brache (1990) proposed, or is a stakeholder model of the organization more appropriate, whereby HRD functions as the advocate of valid and legitimate interests of an inclusive set of groups and shapes corporate strategy (Evan and Freeman, 1988)?

The purpose of this paper is to answer the following questions: How can differing definitions of human development in organizations be used to distinguish alternative HRD philosophies? How do these frameworks differ in terms of their philosophical and political assumptions and contributing schools of thought? How have these frameworks informed HRD theory, and how has HRD practice been conceived from each perspective? And, finally, what new directions are emerging from theory and practice that might overcome the shortcomings of existing philosophies and more adequately answer to the challenges of the rapidly changing world of work?

Human Development and the Field of HRD

HRD theory and practice appear to be driven by three different theoretical approaches related to the purpose of developing persons in organizations. These frameworks can be classified following the classic work of Lawrence Kohlberg and Rochelle Mayer (1972) who distinguished among three streams of educational ideologies, romantic, cultural transmission, and progressive. A similar triarchy was described by Malcolm Knowles (1984) who described three models of adult education: mechanistic/behaviorist, cognitive, and organismic/humanistic, each associated with a unique strategies for learning and based on "three different models of man" (p. 6.6).

The system developed in this article classifies schools of thought according to the central focus of the developmental activity: person-centered, production-centered, and principled problem-solving. Each encompasses a range of models, theories, authors, and schools of thought, is rooted in different philosophical traditions, and makes specific assumptions about the nature of human beings and the nature of organizations and society.

Frameworks of Human Development

Table 1 presents the frameworks of human development in greater detail. Each is described in terms of its roots in philosophy and the social sciences, the proposed aims or end goals, the assumptions about human nature, and about the nature of organizations and the larger economic and societal context. Examples of specific theories, concepts, and strengths and limitations of each theory are also given.

Table 1
Classification of Theories of Human Development

	Person-Centered	Production-Centered	Principle
Philosophical Roots	• Humanistic Psychology: (Maslow, Rogers) • Romantic Idealism: Rousseau • Existentialism	• Behaviorism: Skinner • Libertarian Philosophy: Smith, Friedman,	• Cogi Psyc • Prag • Radi • Post
Aims of Human Development	• Self-development, • Allow "inner good" to unfold; Remove barriers to maturation	• Competently and efficiently fulfillling organizational roles; • Increasing performance as defined by organization	• Inte inter • Dyn clair • Self- perf
Assumptions about human nature	• Inborn wisdom and goodness; • Health equals happiness	• Needs/wants determined by society/culture; • Health equals adjustment	• Abil inter • Exp • Heal unde
Assumptions about nature of organizations	Optimal organizational. functioning achieved through happy people	• Goal oriented, • Goals determined by owners, • Human capital employed to achieve goals	• Stak • Tem chan need stak
Examples	• Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs • Herzberg's 2-factor theory • Spirituality, • Meaning of Work, • Quality of Worklife	• Industrial Training • Rummler and Brache • Mager and Pipe, • Performance Technology	• Law orga • Mas Orga

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Person-Centered Development

The concept of person-centered development in HRD is rooted in the philosophical traditions of idealism, humanism, and romanticism. Romanticism was an intellectual movement that was at its height in Europe toward the end of the 18th and early 19th century (Flew, 1979). In more recent times, the romantic notion of development was expressed by A. S. Neill, whose Summerhill represented an example of a school based on these principles, and proponents of the California growth movement, who emphasized inner growth and the connection to one's inner reality. Personality theorists of humanistic psychology— the "third force" in psychology— included scholars such as Henry Murray, Gordon Allport, Abraham Maslow, and Carl Rogers. Strongly influenced by Existentialism, they carried on the romantic tradition in contemporary times. Many concepts and theories in organizational development and HRD in general have their origins in this philosophy.

The person-centered notion of development is the discovery and unfolding of innate qualities, of the inner good and inborn health of the human being, the search for personal fulfillment and meaning. Successful development means being all one can be. Individuals are by nature proactive, rational, self-aware, and complex; they possess freedom and dignity, and carry the responsibility to find meaning for their lives. There is the assumption of an inner spontaneous tendency toward positive values and a strong emphasis on inner states and feelings. Performance, skills, achievements, tasks, and responsibilities and duties are not satisfying in themselves, but important as means to inner growth, awareness, happiness, and health.

Strengths of the person-centered approach. The strength of this philosophy of HRD lies in the compelling idea of the perfectibility of the human being, the importance of individuals and their responsibility to the self, and the role of the untapped potentialities inside every one.
It places the locus of control over and responsibility for the individual's life and actions squarely at his or her feet. This position adheres to the Kantian imperative that persons should always be treated as ends in themselves, never as means to an end. It proposes that employees are stakeholders in their organizations whose rights are on par with the shareholders, i.e. owners of the firm. The perspective paves the conceptual way for employee participation and employee wellness approaches that have been central to organizational development since the 1950s.

Critique. The person-centered view of HRD, however, is also vulnerable as a reasoned basis for HRD because it is largely silent about the economic dimension of work in organizations. While self-development might well be seen as a primary individual goal and perhaps a public good that deserves public support in the form of educational opportunities for everybody, it is not the primary charter of organizations operating in a competitive environment. Organizations incur direct, indirect, and opportunity costs when conducting HRD activities. These costs will put them at an economic disadvantage over organizations who provide fewer HRD activities, unless the pay-off of HRD interventions exceeds their costs and provides a higher return than investing the training budget to, say, upgrading machines or purchasing new equipment. The person-centered notion of human development is insufficient as the sole foundation for HRD, despite its appeal and popularity. The next section will describe the production-centered philosophy of development and evaluate its merits within the context of today's rapidly changing economic and social world.

Production-Centered Development

While the person-centered view of development emphasizes individual needs and goals, the concept of production-centered development stresses the enhancement of the productive capacity of a person as the goal of development. The role of HRD is to transmit knowledge, skills, and social and moral rules of the organization. The process of transmission is conducted through educational technology and a behavioristic approach (Skinner, 1971). Successful development means the acquisition of prerequisite skills, knowledge, abilities, attitudes, and values in order to be able to respond favorably to external demands. This framework depends heavily on role theory (Stryker and Statham, 1985); development is evaluated in terms of the degree of fit between measurable and observable behaviors and role expectations, and not, as in the case of the person-centered view, in terms of feelings, thoughts, or other internal states. In the 1940s this position was expressed well by Dooley in The Training Within Industry Report (cited in Swanson and Torraco, 1995, p. 2): "Training is for the good of plant production— it is a way to solve production problems through people; it is specific and helps people to acquire skills through the use of what they learned."

Strengths of the production-centered approach. The strength of this framework lies in its ability to find quick responses to well-defined problems. Within an immediate time horizon, HRD can help provide the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to meet clear objectives. In situations where clear goals exist, where these goals are agreed upon and supported, where the ways to meet these goals are proven and known, and the required resources are available, issue-focused HRD can provide the necessary support to meet these important objectives. This view is predominant in the management sciences, including organizational behavior, organizational theory, industrial/organizational psychology, and industrial relations. It posits the rational aspect of an organization, makes planning and strategy possible, and enables planning, forecasting, and goal setting.

Rooted in a libertarian philosophy (Maitland, 1994), the relationship between employee and the organization is characterized by rational and free choice and a clear contractual understanding of the rights (pay, benefits, etc.) and duties (task, working hours, etc) by each party.

Critique of the production-centered approach. The two primary lines of criticism against this view center on the underlying view of the nature of organizations and the value statement inherent in this model. The major criticism of the production-centered view is that it portrays organizations as static, closed, mechanistic systems rather than open systems in dynamic, continuous interchange with the external environment. Requirements change constantly, and employees and managers alike satisfice rather than maximize the demands of multiple constituents. In a similar vein, Weick (1990) asserted that there is a growing consensus that management is "more like cartography than like the board game 'Mastermind' in which people try to discover a pre-set pattern" (p. 317). Without a pre-set pattern of correct answers, goal setting becomes a response to a continuously shifting set of preferences that require active and intelligent interpretation by all participants. Where organizational goals are ambiguous and means to achieving those goals uncertain, narrowly defined job skills are of limited effectiveness. Swanson and Torraco (1995) spoke about this complexity when introducing a taxonomy of performance with two tiers— managing the system and changing the system. As they and other observers of the changing nature of work (for example Reich, 1991) noted, the specific definable and trainable tasks that formed the vast majority of work in the early part of this century are giving way to more amorphous, ambiguous task requirements. This calls for a broader range of skills, attitudes, behaviors, and abilities for which the cultural transmission model with its mechanistic notion of skill transfer may no longer be adequate.

Principled problem-solving as the goal of development

When the person-centered view of development was the unfolding of innate, latent patterns and potentialities, and the production-centered model stressed the adjustment of the individual to the demands of the external environment, the principled problem-solving view seeks to overcome the shortcomings of both. It is the most complex stance and perhaps the most difficult to implement. Based on the progressive educational ideology (a term first introduced by John Dewey) it defines development as "an active change in patterns of thinking brought about by experiential problem-solving situations" (Kohlberg & Mayer, 1972, p. 455). This orientation, with its emphasis on cognitive development, principled and interactive problem-solving, and pragmatic orientation is well suited to serve as a guiding philosophy for HRD in today's rapidly changing social and economic environment.

In contrast to the two previous views, progressivism stresses the interactive, dynamic aspect of problem-solving in a given social situation. It focuses on the primacy of experience and experiential learning, on the active involvement of individuals in emergent problematic social situations. The emphasis is neither on the internalization of established goals or values, nor the unfolding of spontaneous impulses and emotions, but the "active change in patterns of response to problematic social situations" (Kohlberg & Mayer, 1972, p. 455). The aim is the achievement of a solution that satisfies all participants given the specific situational constraints.

A second foundation of this philosophy is cognitive psychology and its central assumption of cognition as mental structures, internally organized wholes or systems used to structure our experience of the external world. Cognition filters the information about the environment we perceive, the experiences that we have, the meaning that we attribute to our experiences, and our thinking about our world in general. Cognitive structures, however, are not fixed but able to change. Cognitive development results from a dialogue between the individual's cognitive structure and the structure of the environment. In a given situation thinking that can envision solutions that are more encompassing and better able to integrate the demands of the various participants is preferred.

The aims of human development in this philosophy are to foster the ability for optimal functioning through critical thinking and problem-solving, for an integration and synthesis of internal and external demands, and of balancing competing claims with the goal of functional (in the broad, pragmatic sense) optimization of the situation. This includes an examination of the underlying assumptions of a given situation, an awareness of the

historical conditions that have led to the current situation, the ability to take others' roles and perceive accurately the perspectives of all parties involved, and the personal maturity and integrity to find creative solutions in situations where scarce resources demand tough decisions. Rather than advocating the exclusive development of the self, or blindly adhering to an external goal, this approach suggests the continuous re-definition of a given situation in light of its requirements, the courage to challenge past solutions and examine current assumptions, and the consideration of dynamically changing configurations of the needs and wants of all stakeholders.

Strengths of the principled problem-solving approach. The major strength of this orientation to HRD is its inclusiveness and systematic nature. In a fast-changing world, the resources, concerns, and needs of all must be considered, and an inclusive approach is superior to win-lose or lose-lose propositions. Secondly, this approach is capable to address issues of global scope, social justice and democratic values, and attempts to find solutions to the complex problems of a democratic market economy. It provides for full participation of all employees and has the potential of creating situations where everybody wins.

Critique A major shortcomings of this approach to human development are its requirement for long-term commitment and development in an competitive market place that oftentimes rewards short-term success. Maitland (1994) addressed this problem and argued that political changes must precipitate changes in organizational policies, in order to avoid punishment of organizations that forego short-term profits for the sake of long-term development. As long as organizations are evaluated on quarterly fiscal results alone, long-term strategies that sacrifice short-run results for long-term gain may not become wide-spread. However, as even Aktouf, writing from a radical humanistic perspective, observes: 'this movement toward a more human firm is neither a romantic ideal nor a philanthropic gesture, nor a utopia, but a necessity .... [Organizations] need to step out of the Taylorian rut....[T]he time has come for the employee who knows how (and is allowed) to think, to react, to modify" (pp. 417-418).

Secondly, many companies, especially start-up and small firms, are unable to invest in the long-term development of their employees, and there are some job categories that do not require extensive use of higher-level cognitive skills and problem-solving abilities. Lastly, not all employees may be willing to become involved and take on greater shares of responsibility and participation, so that the developmental approach may only be applied selectively.

Conclusion

In this paper, the author proposed that the principal foundations and assumptions of the various theories, concepts, and practices of Human Resource Development might be understood as three distinct approaches: person-centered, production–centered, and principled problem-solving. These approaches are based on different philosophies of development, which is so centrally placed in the name of the profession. This attempt at a classification and explication of the roots and strengths and potential shortcomings of each approach can be useful for furthering theory and practice of this emerging field.

A HRD professional who is, for example, faced with lagging work performance in an organization might approach this issue from any one of the three proposed approaches: From the person-centered perspective, she might propose to post the names of top performers on the lunchroom bulletin board and hold monthly award ceremonies for these employees to instill pride the good performers. From a performance-centered philosophy, she might propose switching from an hourly pay system to a piece rate or pay-for-performance system to provide incentives to work harder. From a principled problem-solving perspective, she might propose an open-book management strategy where employees are given full information about the implications of poor performance for the stakeholders, and charter cross-functional teams to investigate the root causes of the problem and develop solutions. A HRD professional who can select from a number of different approaches will be likely to have a wider range of choices than one who is tied to only one perspective.

A second implication for practice is related to the newly evolving strategic role of HRD. Over the past 10 years, HRD has changed from a narrow function limited to designing and delivering training to a much broader organization-wide role (Gilley & Maycunich, 1998). Recognizing the competitive advantage of a committed and well-qualified workforce, HRD professional are becoming increasingly charged with developing organization-level HRD strategies. Strategic decisions, however, are choices over competing values and principles, and many organizations develop HRD philosophies to guide them. Similarly to the individual examples given above, being aware of the range of options for the HRD strategy will enlarge a firm's range of options. Where HRD professional

can enter into a dialogue with other corporate decision-makers over the underlying values and philosophies of the workforce development, more appropriate solutions become possible. Oftentimes, senior managers come from functional backgrounds such as engineering or operations and have little insight into educational issues. If HRD professionals are able to explain the differences between and relative strengths of the developmental approaches based on the person-centered, production-centered, and principled problem-solving approach views, more deliberate and informed decision-making becomes possible.

A third implication of this explication of different HRD philosophies is for educators and trainers of HRD professionals and other educators working in and with organizations. Training and education in HRD should include information and reflection of the paradigmatic and philosophical foundations of the field. While adult and education university curricula often include at least one course addressing the history and philosophy of the respective field (for instance the heated debates over the direction of vocational education between John Dewey and Charles Prosser in the early part of this century), many HRD introductory courses and textbooks that I am aware of give only short shrift to such matters, instead focusing on functional topics such as instructional design and technology. Debates over the philosophical directions of HRD need to be included in HRD education and training, an area of practice so important to the well-being of society and impacting so many employees.

Finally, the issues raised in this paper also impact research and scholarship. Researchers need to be aware of their own philosophies and value positions regarding the aims of developing persons working in organizations. They ought to state their value preference in the written research reports so as to allow the audience to situate the report and understand its merits and limitations. Secondly, empirical work and further theory development are urgently necessary to learn more about the results of HRD activities conducted within each of the three approaches. If one agrees with a contingency approach, and much of the empirical organization behavior research points to the validity of situation and context specific solutions to problems rather than approaches that stipulate "one best way", then we need clarification to questions such as: Under what conditions (related to a firm, its product or service, its workforce, its market etc.) is one approach more effective than the other? How do personal-level variables (age, gender, education, socio-economical background, profession, etc.) interact with each developmental approach? What are the trade-offs of each approach related to the benefits to the employee and the organization and how should they be reconciled? Such contingency theories are beginning to appear in the management sciences [for example, Lepak & Snell, 1999] discussion of the conditions under which organizations should develop expertise from the inside versus hiring it from the outside) and is need in our field as well.

There is also a need to further address the philosophical and moral/ethical dimensions of HRD, areas not easily suited for empirical work. Here, questions include: What are the ethical/moral responsibilities of an organization towards its employees and vice versa? What are the boundaries of development that an organization can demand that an employee undergo? How to resolve value conflicts between an organization's HRD philosophy and the values/beliefs of its employees?

HRD is a field that is growing in importance and size. Because of its pragmatic orientation, much of the theorizing and research has held a functional flavor with largely unstated assumptions about its values. As the field develops, a clearer and more open debate over its core values and philosophies is needed. I hope that this paper can begin a dialogue over one key aspect of the field: the aims and desired outcomes of development of persons in organizations through the field of HRD.

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A Study of the Influence of the Theoretical Foundations of Human Resource Development on Research and Practice

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There is a deficiency of empirically based literature on the relationship between theory and practice in HRD and little attention has been given to the relationship between the theoretical foundations of HRD and HRD research and practice. This study surveyed researchers and practitioners in the HRD academic community as to which theoretical foundations are and will be influencing the field and which foundations are of most importance in research and practice now and in the future. Preliminary results are discussed.

Keywords: Theoretical Foundations, Theory to Practice

There is a deficiency of empirically based literature on the relationship between theory and practice in HRD. Not since the late 1980s have the theoretical foundations of human resource development been discussed or critiqued with any constancy or depth in the research literature and no publications were located during a literature review that discussed the relationship between theory and practice. Yet, the theoretical foundations are "the intellectual underpinnings of the profession (Chalofsky, 1992, p.181), and "research efforts must continually be guided by underlying theory" (Jacobs, 1990, p.70).

While the relationship between theory and practice has generated moderate conceptual discussion in the related literature, inadequate attention has been given to the relationship between the theoretical foundations of HRD and the practice and outcomes of HRD. No research was located that identified the theoretical foundations of HRD by surveying researchers and practitioners in the academic community as to which theoretical foundations are and will be influencing the field and which foundations are of most importance in research and practice now and in the future.

Although there seems to be general agreement that we work from an interdisciplinary body of knowledge, there is no agreement as to what part of this body of knowledge should be considered as essential for HRD professionals (Jacobs, 1990). "Existing knowledge derived from the various contributing areas should be reviewed and analyzed to reveal gaps in knowledge and direct HRD research efforts in a more systematic manner, using theories unique to HRD as the organizing principles" (Jacobs, 1990, p70).

Theoretical Framework

Although the foundations of HRD are evident in several notable HRD publications, no published research identified how scholars and practitioners use the theoretical foundations, or the extent of their influence on research and practice, or even how they were defined. Thus, an obvious conclusion is that the foundations are conceptual in nature and are based primarily on evident opinion and rational perception "whether they are explicitly acknowledged or not" (Passmore, 1996, p. 200) when engaged in HRD research or practice.

The theoretical framework for the study was based on a synthesization of the conceptual propositions of Swanson (1996; 1999), Jacobs (1990), and Hatcher (1999). This synthesization implies that the theoretical foundations derived from several disciplines such as general systems theory, economics, psychology, sociology, and ethics, prescribe a conceptual and ideological framework for the field of human resource development research and practice.

Swanson (1996, 1999), Jacobs (1989; 1990), Watkins (1989, 1990), Hatcher (1999), and others have periodically discussed and modified their interpretations of the theoretical foundations of HRD. However, the foundations of HRD/PI have not been reviewed in light of their currency within the discipline of HRD/PI since their inclusion as theoretical disciplines in the late 1980s (Hatcher, 1999). The current hypothesis is that many of these same disciplines contribute to research and practice of HRD. Thus, it is important to examine the currency and

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efficaciousness of each discipline (Hatcher, 1999) and "contributing bodies of knowledge made explicit"(Jacobs, 1990, p.66).

The disciplines identified in the related literature included economics, education, ethics, general systems theory, learning, sociology, organizational behavior, field and intervention theory, design theory, and psychology (Dean, 1993; Hatcher, 1999; Jacobs, 1989, 1990; Rothwell & Sredl, 1992; Ruona & Swanson, 1997; Swanson, 1996, 1999; Watkins, 1989, 1990). Furthermore, the validity of the theoretical foundations of HRD and the roles that they may play in enhancing or hindering HRD research and practice have been intuitive at best and all but ignored in the related literature (Hatcher, 1999).

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. How do respondent's rate theoretical foundations of HRD in terms of current and future influences on and importance to HRD research and practice?
2. Which theoretical foundations of HRD have substantially changed and how have such changes influenced HRD research and practice?
3. To what extent do respondents feel alignment with, understand, and teach the theoretical foundations of HRD?
4. To what extent do respondents perceive that the theoretical foundations *currently*, *should be*, or *will* influence HRD research and practice?

Methodology

The research design was *ex post facto* survey research based on a review of related literature. Empirical and conceptual studies and practitioner-based literature published between the early 1970's and the present were reviewed. The review included human resource development related topics such as training and performance improvement and theoretical framework, theoretical disciplines, and related topics. This review was used to develop survey items for the 81 item Theoretical Foundations of Human Resource Development Inventory, which was used to collect data from the research sample.

Sample population

The study population for the present study was the human resource development (HRD) academic/scholarly community. The sample used in this study is organized under the *Academy of Human Resource Development (AHRD)*, an international organization composed of over 600 recognized scholars, researchers, and practitioners performing HRD-related research throughout the world. The 605 members of the Academy were used as the sample population for the study.

Instrumentation

The instrument was a new survey designed by the researcher from a review of related literature to answer the research questions. A total of 81 instrument items as independent variables were developed from a review of literature and interviews with HRD practitioners and scholars. A total of 6 demographic items as dependent variables were developed from the literature and interviews.

The instrument was pilot tested with a group of 7 scholar/practitioners to insure face validity and usability. Pilot participants were also asked to establish content validity. Changes suggested by the pilot-test group were implemented prior to final submittal to the study sample. In order to differentiate between research questions variables across time such as "To what extent do respondents perceive that the theoretical foundations *currently*, *should be*, or *will* influence HRD research and practice?" multiple survey items were included in the final instrument.

Data Collection

Procedures included mail-outs of instruments to the entire population of 605 HRD scholars as a subset of the HRD scholar/practitioner community. Follow-up procedures included a second mail out and two follow-up electronic mail reminders.

Data Analysis

Preliminary data analysis included basic descriptive statistics, factor analysis, analysis of variance, and paired samples analyses. Descriptive statistics were used to identify variance in survey items. Multivariate analysis of variance was used to determine the differences in mean scores between variables. Note that the analysis is incomplete.

Results and Findings

Few references were found on theoretical foundations of HRD and no references were located on how changes in theoretical disciplines have influenced HRD, especially HRD outcomes.

Several disciplines were identified as contributing to the knowledge base of HRD, namely education, systems theory, economics, psychology, sociology, and organizational behavior. Other disciplines such as anthropology and management science have also been mentioned (Chalofsky & Lincoln, 1983). Jacobs (1990) indicated five major bodies of knowledge: education, systems theory, economics, psychology, and organizational behavior. Passmore (1996), reflecting on the earlier work of Swanson, said there were three disciplinary bases suggested as the foundation of HRD: economics, general systems theory, and psychology. Swanson recently added ethics as a theoretical foundation to general systems theory, economics, and psychology (1999). Jacobs (1990), Swanson (1999), and Passmore (1996) concluded that although various bodies of knowledge had influenced HRD, HRD should focus on the *economic, psychological, systems theory, social* benefits, and *ethics* of HRD and the contributing areas should be reviewed and analyzed.

The survey was mailed to 605 Academy of Human Resource Development members. At the time of this preliminary report 210 surveys had been returned for a 34.7% response rate. A total of 205 surveys were usable. Non-respondents were not significantly different from respondents in terms of demographics. Reasons for non-response were primarily (a) I do not work with theoretical foundations, and (b) I didn't have time to complete the survey and get it back in time.

Demographics resulted in a profile of respondents. The general profile is a male (53.4%) or female (43.7%), between 41 and 60 years of age (63.6%) with a doctorate (Ph.D. 50.5% and EdD 19.4%) in HRD (12.1%) or Adult Education (7.3%). Respondents' current position was practitioner (31.6%) or faculty member (Assistant Professor 13.1%, Associate Professor 13.1%, Instructor or other faculty 15.5%) and spent varied amounts of time as a practitioner (15% indicated they spent 100% as practitioner and 11.2% spent 30% of their time)

The survey was initially divided into 6 logical sections by the researcher. Each section was designed to answer one or more of the research questions. Preliminary results of the principle components factor analysis with varimax rotation revealed 5 comprehensive factors with eigenvalues over .40 and one undeveloped factor. Thus, the factor analysis essentially supported the preliminary conceptual divisions.

Items 1 – 30 asked for opinions on whether a theoretical *foundation is currently, should be*, or *will* influence HRD research or practice. Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) revealed a significant difference ($p = .000$) between sociology *is, should be,* or *will* influence HRD research ($F=39.683$). Paired samples t-tests revealed that sociology *should be* influencing HRD research was significant ($t = 8.916$ and mean of 4.82) followed by *will* influence ($t = 5.717$, mean of 4.51), and *is currently* influencing research ($t = 8.916$, mean 4.04). Sociology's influence on *practice* indicated similar results of MANOVA ($F = 65.911$) and paired samples t-tests which revealed that sociology *should be* influencing HRD practice as significant ($t = 11.260$ and mean of 4.72), followed by *will* influence ($t = 7.390$, mean of 4.27), and *is currently* influencing research ($t = 6.186$, mean 3.72). See Table 1 for similar results of economics, psychology, ethics, and general systems theory (GST). Note that all paired samples t-tests were significant at the $p < .05$ level.

Table 1. Theoretical Foundations MANOVAs and Means for Research & Practice by Time Variable

Theoretical Foundation	MANOVA F value for RESEARCH and PRACTICE		Means for RESEARCH			Means for PRACTICE		
			Is	S/B	will	is	S/B	will
Sociology	*39.683	*65.911	4 04	4.82	4.51	3.72	4.72	4.27
Psychology	*10.324	*23.529	4.98	5.27	5.13	4.63	5.14	4.96
Economics	*46.217	*11.260	3.68	4.48	4.51	3.97	4.50	4.39
Ethics	*102.53	*138.46	3.65	4.96	4.47	3.57	5.13	4.43
General Systems Theory	*29.107	*45.901	4.50	5.09	4.62	4.00	5.04	4.59

* Significant $p < .05$

Items 31 – 40 asked for opinions on the extent that a theoretical foundation was currently influencing individual respondents' research and practice. Results revealed a significant p< .000 difference among all foundations with a MANOVA of 1677.841 for research and 1893.332 for practice. Paired samples t-tests revealed significant difference between all pairs of theoretical foundations with the exception of pairs referenced in Table 2. Means for each theoretical foundation indicated that psychology (4.83, 4.96), GST (4.66, 4.88), ethics (4.33, 4.82), sociology (4.19, 4.29), and economics (3.82, 4.08) influenced research and practice respectively.

Table 2. Theoretical Foundations Pairs *Not* Significant

Theoretical Foundation	*t-test* values		Means for Practice		Means for Research	
	Practice	Research				
Sociology & Economics	*1.663		4.29	4.08		
Psychology & Ethics	*1.663		4.96	4.82		
Psychology & †GST	*.656	*1.472	4.96	4.88	4.83	4.66
Ethics & GST	*-.516		4.82	4.88		
Sociology & Ethics		*-.922			4.19	4.33

* NOT significant p <. 05 †General System Theory

Items 41 and 42 requested respondents to rank order the theoretical foundations in order of importance to HRD research and practice. Results revealed that respondents rated economics (3.67) first followed by ethics (3.40), sociology (3.21), psychology (2.43), and GST (2.28) as most important to HRD research. Respondents rated sociology (3.48) first followed by economics (3.12), ethics (3.10), psychology (2.82), and GST (2.57) as most important to HRD practice.

Items 43 through 47 asked respondents to rate the extent they felt theoretical foundations had changed since the inception of HRD as a field of study. Means indicated that ethics (4.06), followed by economics (4.04), psychology (3.95), sociology (3.77), and GST (3.69) had changed. MANOVA revealed a significant difference between theoretical foundations (F = 1044.445, p = .000). Additional significant results are illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3. Significant Change in Theoretical Foundations

Theoretical Pairs	T-tests	First Mean	Second Mean
Sociology & Psychology	*-1.926	3.78	3.95
Sociology & Economics	*-2.520	3.78	4.04
Sociology & Ethics	*-2.407	3.78	4.05
Psychology & Economics	*-.820	3.95	4.04
Economics & Ethics	*-.192	4.04	4.05
Psychology & Ethics	*-.918	3.95	4.05

*Significant p <. 05

Items 48 and 49 sought to identify the extent respondents felt the impact of theoretical foundations was clear on research and practice. Mean results indicated that the impact of theoretical foundations was not clear on research (3.53) and practice (3.03).

Items 50-54 asked respondents to rate the extent that each of the theoretical foundations influenced their personal philosophy. Results indicated that their personal philosophies were influenced by psychology (5.04), followed by ethics (4.96), GST (4.95), sociology (4.38), and economics (4.05).

Items 55-59 asked respondents to rate their knowledge and skills of each of the theoretical foundations. Results indicated that respondents had knowledge and skills in GST (5.12), psychology ((4.94), ethics (4.64), sociology (4.34), and economics (4.07). Items 60-69 asked for feedback on the extent respondents learned the theoretical foundations through formal education or informally and/or on the job. See Table 4 for results.

Items 70-75 asked respondents to rate their teaching and understanding of the theoretical foundations of HRD. Results indicated that teaching of theoretical foundations as part of one or more courses was rated higher (4.75) than teaching theoretical foundations as a separate course (2.63). Item 72 asked respondents to rate the extent

they felt theoretical foundations ware difficult to teach with a mean of 3.16. Results of questions about student's knowledge of theoretical foundations and whether respondents felt their colleagues had knowledge of or taught theoretical foundations revealed means of 3.8, 4.3, and 4.1 respectively.

Table 4. Means of formal and informal learning of theoretical foundations

Formal		Informal	
Theoretical Foundation	**Means**	**Theoretical Foundation**	**Means**
Psychology	4.94	Ethics	4.88
GST	4.61	Psychology	4.62
Sociology	4.36	Economics	4.37
Economics	4.09	Sociology	4.33
Ethics	3.73	GST	4.19

Items 76 through 81 asked respondents to rate whether they felt theory or practice was, should be, or will be having the most influence on HRD. Results indicated that theory should be (3.91), will (3.59), and is (3.17) having an influence on HRD and that practice will (4.70), is (4.44), and should (4.24) be influencing HRD. Additional statistical analyses such as MANOVAs on demographics as dependent variables with various iterations of items 1 – 81 as independent variables and additional within group analysis are planned.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Several conclusions may be drawn from the preliminary results of the study. It appears that respondents felt that each of the theoretical foundations should, will, and is influencing both HRD theory and practice and that psychology followed by General Systems Theory and ethics had overall most influence on HRD theory and practice. Psychology was having the most influence on individual's research and practice followed by GST and ethics. Respondents rank ordered the theoretical foundations by importance to research as economics, ethics, sociology, psychology, and GST and by importance to practice as sociology, economics, ethics, psychology, and GST. Theoretical foundations that have changed since the inception of HRD as a field of study included ethics, economics, psychology, sociology, and GST. Respondent's personal philosophies were influenced by, in order of influence, psychology, ethics, GST, sociology, and economics. Respondents indicated knowledge and skills in GST, psychology, ethics, sociology, and economics. There was only one difference between rankings of learning the theoretical foundations formally or informally. Formal learning included psychology, GST, sociology, economics, and ethics while informal learning included ethics, psychology, economics, sociology, and GST.

It should be noted that self-reports used in this study are limited to participant's perceptions of theoretical foundations. These perceptions may be limited to the depth of knowledge and understanding that participants have of the five theoretical foundations listed and the extent that participants recognize and comprehend the influence of these foundations on their research and practice.

Theoretical foundations are taught as part of one or more courses and colleagues have knowledge of and teach theoretical foundations. Students do not appear to have knowledge of the theoretical foundations. Theory should be having the greatest impact on HRD and practice will have most influence in the future.

It is interesting that psychology, GST and ethics are having the most influence on both the theory and practice of HRD as a field of study and as influences on individual respondent's research and practice and personal philosophies. Of greater interest is the finding that psychology was ranked fourth in terms of importance to both research and practice while economics ranked first for research and sociology ranked first for practice. Psychology was also rated low in terms of change as a theoretical foundation while ethics rated highest. Finally, theory should be influencing HRD and it appears that practice may have more influence on HRD in the near future.

There are several limitations inherent this preliminary study. One possible limitation is that an over reliance on self-reporting surveys leads to invalid conclusions, especially with content as complex and philosophic as the theoretical foundations of HRD. A case could be made against self reporting due to the inherent bias that scholars and practitioners in HRD may have for or against a particular foundation as well as the influence that deep or superficial knowledge of a particular foundation may have on reporting. For example, a respondent may have a cursory understanding of general systems theory, thus have little or no deep comprehension as to how systems theory impacts their research or practice, yet rate general system's theory high on the survey.

Further research should attempt to identify additional theoretical foundations or foundations mentioned in the literature review herein but not considered prevalent and their influence on research and practice as well as seeking to discover how practitioners and scholars actually use the theoretical foundations in their research and practice. Future research should also identify cultural differences between the influences of theoretical foundations and research and practice. Additionally, in order to gain more depth of understanding, more qualitative methods should be employed in future research to identify whether existing foundations that are being used are in fact the "right" ones. It is also important to identify whether or not there is an over reliance on any one or two foundations and explore the influence this is having on HRD research and practice. Finally, questions concerning how theoretical foundations are considered "essential" by HRD scholars and practitioners and whether or not the field needs to consciously shift the focus from a currently predominant foundation to another less predominant one to enhance the disconnect between theory and practice.

Significance of the Study to New Knowledge in HRD

Although human resource development (HRD) as a field of study has been analyzed from its theoretical perspectives to a degree, there has been no distinct attempt to further explore the theoretical foundations. No research is available that seeks input on the importance and influences of the theoretical foundations of HRD from scholars and practitioners. The present study provides a baseline of data to further our awareness of the importance of the theoretical foundations and provides insights into how researchers and practitioners view theoretical foundations as influences on their own and the HRD field's research and practice.

As an interdisciplinary field of study HRD's theoretical disciplines must be rigorously studied and better understood by scholars and practitioners. Without such a focus on the theoretical foundations of research and practice HRD is destined to remain atheoretical and in nature and poor practice will continue to undermine its credibility (Swanson, 1997).

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Clarifying and Defining the Performance Paradigm of Human Resource Development

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The performance paradigm of HRD has been sharply criticized recently. However, many of the criticisms reflect rather gross misunderstandings that stem in part from the lack of definition and explication of the core assumptions of the performance paradigm. This article proposes a definition and eleven core assumptions. Some of the criticisms of the performance paradigm are refuted and specific myths addressed.

Keywords: HRD Theory, Performance

The field of human resource development has been characterized by a variety of definitions (Weinberger, 1998) and perspectives. Since 1995 there has been an intense debate in the literature around the "learning" versus the "performance" paradigms of HRD (Watkins & Marsick, 1995; Swanson, 1995a, 1995b). This has occurred in spite of the fact that human resource development practice has been found to be increasingly focusing on performance outcomes and developing systems to support high performance (Bassi & Van Buren, 1999).

In this debate the performance paradigm of HRD has come under increasing criticism, some of which reflects misconceptions about the basic tenets of performance-based HRD. For example, Barrie and Pace (1998) argue for a more educational approach to HRD manifested through an organizational learning approach. They were also particularly critical of the performance paradigm:

> *Performance consists of the demonstration of specific behaviors designed to accomplish specific tasks and produce specific outcomes (Swanson & Gradous, 1986). Improvements in performance are usually achieved through behavioral control and conditioning. Indeed, performance many be changed or improved through methods that allow for very little if any willingness and voluntariness on the part of the performers. In fact, behavioral performance may be enhanced decidedly by processes that allow for minimal or no rational improvement on the part of performers in the change process. Their willingness of consciousness as rational agents is neither encouraged nor required. Such persons function in a change process purely as "means" and not "ends" (Holding, 1981)*

Recently, their criticisms became even harsher (Barrie & Pace, 1999):

> *It is the performance perspective that denies a person's fundamental and inherent agency and self-determination, not the learning perspective. All of the negative effects of training come from a performance perspective (p. 295).*

Bierema (1997) calls for a return to a focus on individual development and appears to equate the performance perspective to the mechanistic model of work. She says, "The machine mentality in the workplace, coupled with obsessive focus on performance, has created a crisis in individual development (p.23)." She goes on to say that "valuing development only if it contributes to productivity is a viewpoint that has perpetuated the mechanistic model of the past three hundred years (p. 24)." Peterson and Provo (1999) also equate the performance paradigm with behaviorism.

Dirkx (1997) offers a somewhat similar view when he says that "HRD continues to be influenced by an ideology of scientific management and reflects a view of education where the power and control over what is learned, how, and why is located in the leadership, corporate structure, and HRD staff (p. 42)." He goes on to say that the traditional view in which learning is intended to contribute to bottom-line performance leads "practitioners to focus on designing and implementing programs that transmit to passive workers the knowledge and skills needed to improve the company's overall performance and, ultimately, society's economic competitiveness. In this market-driven view of education, learning itself is defined in particular ways, largely by the perceived needs of the sponsoring corporation and the work individuals are required to perform (p. 43)."

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What is striking about these comments and others offered by critics of the performance paradigm of HRD is that they all contain rather gross errors and misunderstandings. A core premise of this paper is that many criticisms reflect a poor understanding of what the performance paradigm really means. However, the key reason for the misunderstanding is that the performance paradigm of HRD has not been clearly defined and presented in such a way that its core assumptions and theoretical premises are evident and easily accessible to other researchers. Performance is not a unitary or consensually defined construct, within or outside HRD (Holton, 1999; Swanson, 1999). The result is that performance advocates must blame themselves for the misunderstandings. The first purpose of this paper then is to clearly define the performance paradigm. After years of debate and theory building, it seems that it is time to reexamine "where we stand" with the performance paradigm of HRD and, in the process, clarify misunderstandings in the literature.

A second purpose of this paper is to demonstrate that there is less of a gap between the performance and learning paradigms than is represented by learning paradigm advocates. Simply, when properly and clearly framed, the performance paradigm is not what the learning paradigm advocates present it to be. While there can be no denying that there will always be some tension between the learning systems and work systems in an organization (Van der Krogt, 1998), there is actually more common ground than has been portrayed by performance critics.

In sum, the overall goal of this paper is <u>not</u> to argue for a unifying definition or perspective of HRD. Rather, it is hoped that the debate can become clearer and more accurate as a result of a better articulation of the performance paradigm. As Kuchinke (1998) has articulated, it is probably not possible or even desirable to resolve paradigmatic debates, but that the sharp dualism that has characterized this debate is also not appropriate or necessary.

Definition of the Performance Paradigm of HRD

The performance paradigm of HRD has not been formally defined in the literature, although there are definitions of HRD that are performance-based (Weinberger, 1998). The performance paradigm of HRD may be defined as:

> *The performance paradigm of HRD holds that the purpose of HRD is to advance the mission of the organizational system which sponsors the HRD efforts by improving the capabilities of individuals working in the organization and improving the organizational systems in which they perform their work.*

Core Assumptions of the Performance Paradigm of HRD

1-Organizations must perform to survive and prosper, and individuals who work within organizations must perform if they wish to advance their careers and maintain employment. The performance paradigm views performance as a fact of organizational life that is not optional. If organizations do not perform, they decline and eventually disappear. Performance is not defined as only profit, but rather by whatever means the organization uses to define its core outcomes (e.g., citizen services for a government organization). Every organization has core outcomes and constituents or customers who expect them to be achieved. Even non-profit and government organizations face restructuring or extinction if they do not achieve their core outcomes.

By extension then, if individual employees do not perform in a manner that supports the organization's long-term interests, they are unlikely to advance in the organization and may ultimately lose their jobs. This is not to suggest that employees must blindly follow the organization's mandates. In the short-term they are expected to challenge the organization when necessary but over the long-term every employee must make contributions to core outcomes. Thus, the greatest service HRD can provide to the individual and to the organization is to help improve performance by enhancing expertise and building effective performance systems.

2-The ultimate purpose of HRD is to improve performance of the system in which it is embedded and which provides the resources to support it. The purpose of HRD is to improve performance of the system in which it is embedded (or within which it is working in the case of consultants) and which provides the resources to support it (Swanson & Arnold, 1997). All interventions and activities undertaken by HRD must ultimately

enhance that system's mission-related performance by improving performance at the mission, critical performance sub-system, process and individual levels (Holton, 1999). Aside from general ethical responsibilities (Dean, 1993), HRD's primary accountability is to the system within which it resides.

The system's mission, and the goals derived from it, specify the expected outcomes of that system. Every purposefully organized system operates with a mission, either explicitly or implicitly, and the role of the mission is to reflect the system's relationship with it's external environment. For a business organization, the mission may reflect its relationship with its industry, society and competitors. For a non-profit organization, its mission may reflect its relationship with the community and society. It is important to note that the concept of "performance system" is used instead of "organization." A mission may be defined for any system organized to accomplish some purpose. If the system has a purpose, then it also has desired outputs, so performance theory is applicable

The particular system's definition of its performance relationship with the external environment is fully captured by the mission and goals of the organization. In that sense, this model differs from that of Kaufman and his associates (cf. Kaufman, Watkins, Triner & Smith, 1998; Kaufman, 1987) who have argued that societal benefits should be included as a level of performance. This difference should not be interpreted to mean that societal benefits are unimportant. Rather, I argue that the relationship between the performance system and society is most appropriately captured by the mission of that system.

3-The primary outcome of HRD is not just learning, but also performance. The argument about "learning" versus "performance" has positioned the two as equal and competing outcomes. In reality, this is an inappropriate theoretical argument. Performance and learning really represent two different levels of outcomes that are complementary, not competing. Multi-level theory building has become increasingly popular as a means to integrate competing perspectives (Klein, Tosi, & Cannella, 1999). In management, this divide has been characterized as the "micro" domain where the focus is on the individual, and the "macro" domain where the focus is on the organization. Multi-level theory integrates the two by acknowledging the influence of the organization on the individual, and vice-versa:

> *Multi-level theories illuminate the context surrounding individual-level processes, clarifying precisely when and where such processes are likely to occur within organization. . Similarly, multilevel theories identify the individual-level characteristics, behaviors, attitudes and perceptions that underlie and shape organization-level characteristics and outcomes (Klein, Tosi, & Cannella, 1999, p. 243).*

From the multilevel perspective then, neither level is more or less important. Furthermore, individual learning would be seen as an integral part of achieving organizational and individual goals.

4-Human potential in organizations must be nurtured, respected and developed. Performance advocates believe in the power of learning and the power of people in organizations to accomplish great things. It is important to distinguish between the performance paradigm of HRD and simple performance management. The later does not necessarily honor human potential in organizations like performance oriented HRD does. Performance oriented HRD advocates remain HRD and human advocates at the core. Performance advocates do not believe that emphasizing performance outcomes invalidates their belief in and respect for human potential.

The performance paradigm of HRD recognizes that it is the unleashing of human potential that creates great organizations. While performance advocates emphasize outcomes, they do not demand that outcomes be achieved through control of human potential. Performance advocates fully embrace notions of empowerment and human development because they will also lead to better performance when properly executed (Huselid, 1995; Lam & White, 1998). Furthermore, they see no instances where denying the power of human potential in organizations would lead to better performance. Thus, they see it as completely consistent to emphasize both human potential and performance.

5-HRD must enhance current performance and build capacity for future performance effectiveness. Kaplan and Norton (1996) suggest two categories of performance measures: outcomes and drivers. Unfortunately, they do not offer concise definitions of either. For our purposes, outcomes are measures of effectiveness or efficiency relative to core outputs of the system, sub-system, process or individual. The most typical are financial indicators (profit, ROI, etc.) and productivity measures (units of goods or services produced) and are often generic across similar performance systems. According to Kaplan and Norton, these measures tend to be lag indicators in that they reflect what has occurred or has been accomplished in relation to core outcomes.

Drivers measure elements of performance that are expected to sustain or increase system, sub-syste process, or individual ability and capacity to be more effective or efficient in the future. Thus, they are leading indicators of future outcomes and tend to be unique for particular performance systems. Together with outcome measures, they describe the hypothesized cause and effect relationships in the organization's strategy (Kaplan & Norton, 1996). Thus, drivers should predict future outcomes. For example, for a particular company return on investment might be the appropriate outcome measure which might be driven by customer loyalty and on-time delivery, which in turn might be driven by employee learning so internal processes are optimized.

From this perspective, performance improvement experts who focus solely on actual outcomes, such as profit or units of work produced, are flawed in that they are likely to create short term improvement but neglect aspects of the organization that will drive future performance outcomes. Experts who focus solely on performance drivers such as learning or growth are equally flawed in that they fail to consider the actual outcomes. Only when outcomes and drivers are jointly considered will long-term sustained performance improvement occur. Neither is more or less important, but work in an integrated fashion to enhance mission, process, sub-system and individual performance.

6-HRD professionals have an ethical and moral obligation to insure that attaining organizational performance goals is not abusive to individual employees. Performance advocates agree that the drive for organizational performance can become abusive and unethical. In no way should performance oriented HRD support organizational practices that exceed the boundaries of ethical and moral treatment of employees. Clearly, there is ample room for disagreement as to the specifics of what is ethical and moral, but the basic philosophical position is that performance improvement efforts must be ethical. This is not viewed as hard to accomplish because of the assumption described above that effective performance is good for individuals and organizations.

7-Training/learning activities can not be separated from other parts of the performance system and are best bundled with other performance improvement interventions. Table 3 shows five different perspectives of HRD practice, grouped into three categories (Holton, 1999). Category 1, the learning perspective, used to be predominant in HRD practice. Most HRD practice has advanced to category 2, the learning systems perspective. The key change when moving from the learning to the learning systems perspective is that the outcomes focus changes to performance. The primary intervention continues to be learning, but interventions are also focused on building organizational systems to maximize the likelihood that learning will improve performance. One approach within this category, the performance-based learning approach (column 2a) remains focused on individual learning and associated systems, while the whole systems learning approach (column 2b) focuses on multiple levels of learning and associated systems.

The third category, the performance systems perspective, is the one of primary interest in this article. It is quite familiar to those who have embraced performance improvement or human performance technology (HPT) as their disciplinary base (Brethower, 1995). From these perspectives, the outcome focus is on performance like the

Table 1 - Different perspectives of HRD practice

	1 *Learning Perspective*	*2* *Learning Systems Perspective*		*3* *Performance Systems Perspective*	
	Individual learning	**(a) Performance-based learning**	**(b) Whole systems learning**	**(a) Individual performance improvement**	**(b) Whole systems performance improvement**
Outcome focus	-Enhancing individual learning	-Enhancing individual performance	-Enhancing multiple levels of performance	-Enhancing individual performance	-Enhancing multiple levels of performance
Intervention focus	-Individual learning	-Individual learning -Organizational systems to support individual learning	-Individual, team, and organizational learning -Organizational systems to support multiple levels of learning	-Non-learning individual performance system interventions -Learning if appropriate	-Non-learning multiple level performance system interventions -Multiple level learning if appropriate
Representative	-Adult learning -Instructional	-Performance-based instruction	-Learning organization	-Human performance technology	-Performance improvement

research streams	design	-Transfer of learning			

learning systems perspective, but the intervention focus is on non-learning as well as learning interventions. Within the performance systems perspective, the individual performance improvement approach (column 3a) focuses mostly on individual level performance systems.

The broadest approach, and the one advocated by performance-based HRD, is the whole systems performance improvement approach (column 3b). This approach focuses on improving performance outcomes at multiple levels with non-learning and learning interventions. In most organizations there is no profession or discipline charged with responsibility for assessing, improving and monitoring performance as a whole system. This void is directly responsible for the proliferation of "quick fixes" and faddish improvement programs, most of which focus on only a single element or a subset of performance variables. Because HRD is grounded in systems theory and the whole systems perspective of organizations, it is the logical disciplines to take responsibility for whole system performance improvements in organizations.

8-Effective performance and performance systems are rewarding to the individual and to the organization. Performance clearly benefits the organization. However, lost in the literature is the recognition that effective performance benefits the individual equally. In many instances, performance is presented as almost antithetical to individual benefits, implying one must choose between them. In fact, a variety of research tells us that people like to perform effectively:

- The goal-setting literature tells us that individuals build self-esteem by accomplishing challenging goals (Katzell & Thompson, 1990).
- Hackman and Oldham's (1980) job characteristics model and the research supporting it have shown that experienced meaningfulness of work and responsibility for work outcomes are two critical psychological states that individuals seek.
- Self-efficacy is built when individuals experience success at task performance which is referred to as enactive mastery (Wood & Bandura, 1989).
- Individuals may receive valued intrinsic and extrinsic rewards as a result of performance.
- Performance may lead to more career advancement and career opportunities in organizations.

People do not want to fail to perform in their jobs. Therefore, to the extent that HRD helps them be more successful in their jobs, performance-oriented HRD is just as valuable to the individual as the organization. Effective performance can make a significant contribution to individuals as well as their organizations.

9-Whole systems performance improvement seeks to enhance the value of learning in an organization. Contrary to conventional thinking, performance-based HRD actually seeks to increase the value of the individual employee and individual learning in the organization system, not diminish it. Performance-based HRD fully agrees that enhancing the expertise of individual employees is fundamentally important. However, performance-based HRD suggests that individually oriented HRD violates the fundamental principles of systems theory (Bertalanffy, 1968), which tell us that no one element of the system can be viewed separately from other elements. Intervening in only one element of the system without creating congruence in other parts of the system will not lead to systemic change. Furthermore, intervening in the whole system to improve outcomes or drivers alone is also flawed. For example, a company that downsizes drastically may increase profits (outcomes) in the short run, but it will leave itself without any intellectual capital (driver) for future growth. Human performance technologists (Stolovich & Keeps, 1992) and needs assessors (Moore & Dutton, 1978) have understood the need to view the individual domain within the larger organizational system in order to make individual domain performance improvement efforts more effective. Whole systems performance improvement goes a step further to analyze and improve performance of the whole system through a balanced emphasis on outcomes and drivers in the four performance domains.

10-HRD must partner with functional departments to achieve performance goals. One common lament from HRD practitioners is that the performance approach forces them to deal with organizational variables over which they have no control (e.g., rewards, job design, etc.). Performance oriented HRD acknowledges this and stresses that HRD must become a partner with functional units in the organization to achieve performance improvement, even through learning. Opponents often suggest that HRD should focus on learning because they can influence learning. Yet, classroom learning is the only variable in the performance system over which HRD professionals have the primary influence. Learning organization advocates stress the fact that much of the really

valuable learning that takes place in organizations occurs in the workplace, not the classroom (Watkins & Marsick, 1993). Performance oriented HRD advocates suggest that if HRD is not willing to be a performance partner then it is doomed to play only small roles in organizations with minimal impact and with great risk for downsizing and outsourcing.

11-The transfer of learning into job performance is of primary importance. Because the dependent variable in performance oriented HRD is not just learning, but individual and organizational performance, considerable emphasis is placed on the transfer of learning to job performance. As Holton, Bates and Ruona (in press) point out, researchers are still working to operationalize the organizational dimensions important to enhancing transfer. Nonetheless, there is widespread recognition that the transfer process is not something that occurs by chance or is assured by achieving learning outcomes, but rather is the result of a complex system of influences (Baldwin & Ford, 1988). Learning is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for improving job performance through increased expertise.

Performance advocates are known for emphasizing measurement of HRD outcomes to see if outcomes are achieved. Measuring performance is a common activity in organizations, so it is logical that performance oriented HRD would also emphasize measurement. This emphasis stems from two key observations. First, it seems that important performance outcomes in organizations are almost always measured in some manner. Thus, if HRD is to improve performance, then it must measure its outcomes. Second, components of organizational systems that are viewed as contributing to the organization's strategic mission are usually able to demonstrate their contribution through some measurement. Thus, if HRD is to be a strategic partner, it must measure results.

Myths About The Performance Paradigm of HRD

1-Performance is behavioristic. The performance paradigm is <u>not</u> the same as behaviorism. The performance paradigm is most concerned that performance <u>outcomes</u> occur, but in no way should it be interpreted to restrict the <u>strategies and interventions</u> employed to behavioristic ones. Barrie and Pace's (1998) contention that "improvements in performance are usually achieved through behavioral control and conditioning" is simply wrong. Similarly, Bierema's (1997) view that the performance approach is "mechanistic" and Dirkx's (1997) view that it leads organizations to "transmit to passive workers the knowledge and skills needed" are also wrong. The performance paradigm advocates none of these things, nor must it lead organizations in that direction. This myth probably arose because of the early work in performance technology which indeed grew out of behaviorism (Gilbert, 1978). It may persist for two reasons: a) the performance paradigm places considerable emphasis on building effective systems, in addition to individual development and b) performance-based HRD sanctions interventions which change the system in which the individual works, but do not involve the individual.

It is perfectly possible for a performance-oriented person to take a humanistic approach to HRD, as long as that approach will lead to performance outcomes. For example, interventions that attempt to spark more creativity and innovation in an organization can rarely be done using a behavioristic strategy. Or, a more spiritual approach to adding meaning to employees lives may be quite appropriate, if it leads to performance outcomes. Furthermore, the performance paradigm would not restrict learning solely to the objectivist paradigm (Mezirow, 1996), but would also embrace critical and transformational learning if needed to improve performance. In fact, many organizational change interventions to improve performance encourage employees to think more critically about their work and the organization. The performance paradigm can and does adopt any type of HRD strategy, as long as outcomes occur which further the mission of the system.

2-Performance is deterministic. Another mistaken belief is that the performance paradigm demands that outcomes of HRD interventions be pre-determined before the interventions. If that were true, then the only interventions that would be acceptable would be those for which outcomes could be determined in advance, thereby leaving out strategies such as the learning organization. In fact, the performance paradigm advocates no such thing. Performance advocates are just as comfortable as learning advocates with less certain outcomes, provided that outcomes do occur at some point. For example, in a learning organization example, an organization does not need to know exactly <u>where</u> the performance improvement will occur, but a performance advocate would say that they should expect to see <u>that</u> performance improvements do occur at some point and be able to assess outcomes when they do occur.

3- Performance ignores individual learning and growth. The performance paradigm honors and promotes individual learning and growth just as much as a learning paradigm does. The key difference is that the performance paradigm expects that learning and growth to benefit the performance system in which it is embedded. That is, learning and growth for the sole benefit of the individual and which will never benefit the organization is not acceptable for organization-sponsored HRD. Note that many performance HRD advocates (including this author) would honor learning and growth of the individual as a core outcome for other circumstances, but not for organization-sponsored HRD.

4-Performance is abusive to employees. There is little doubt that a performance approach to HRD can be abusive to employee, particularly when organizations use cost-cutting through downsizing as a substitute for sound performance improvement. However, this is a problem of implementation, not one that is inherent in the theoretical framework. Recent research (e.g., Huselid, 1995; Lau & May, 1998) clearly shows that creating an environment that is supportive and respectful of employees is not only the right thing to do, but also results in improved performance. When properly implemented, performance-based HRD is not abusive to employees.

5-Performance is short-term focused. Once again, this is a problem of implementation, not theory. It is true that many organizations place too much emphasis on short-term results. However, most organizations have learned that focusing on short term performance and not building capacity for long-term success does not work. There is nothing inherent in performance theory that says it must be short-term. Many long-term interventions have been abused by companies and inappropriately conducted with a short-term perspective (e.g., TQM). Performance oriented HRD is no different— some will do it right, and others will not.

An Unresolved Issue: Control of Learning and Individual Growth

There are some unresolved issues that divide the performance advocates from individual learning and development advocates. These seem to be deeply held values and philosophical assumptions (Ruona, 1999). The issue of organizational control over the learning process and outcomes is a difficult one for those who believe that only the individual should control his or her learning process (Bierema, 1997). It may be the one issue about which there can be no agreement because it is a philosophical issue about which people have passionate feelings.

The performance paradigm accepts the premise that the organization and the individual should share control of the individual's learning if the organization is the sponsor of the intervention. However, performance advocates would argue that ignoring performance in favor of individual control may ultimately be bad for the individual if the organization is not able to survive or prosper. The individual employee presumably needs the benefits of employment (e.g., economic, psychological, instrumental) which will only exist if the organization thrives. Thus, sharing control in order to advance organization performance is viewed as appropriate and beneficial to both parties.

The other argument for shared control is an economic one. Simply, if the organization is paying for the HRD efforts, it has a right to derive benefits from it and share control over it. This is one area of criticism that performance advocates truly struggle to understand. It is difficult to understand how organizations can be expected to pay for HRD efforts, but yet have those efforts focus primarily on what is good for the individual. To performance advocates, this sounds perfectly appropriate for schools and universities in a democratic society, but not for organization-sponsored HRD. In fact, most would wholeheartedly support the individually oriented philosophy for learning activities outside of organizations. Yet, most performance advocates also understand there are deeply held fears about institutional control over individual learning. Nonetheless, they view the situation as different once HRD crosses the organizational boundary and employers fund HRD efforts.

Why the Performance Paradigm is Important

Perhaps the best way of thinking about the importance of the performance paradigm is to ask this question: Could organizationally sponsored HRD survive if it did not result in improved performance for the organization? Most would agree that the answer is no. Like all components of an organization, HRD must enhance the organization's effectiveness. The performance paradigm is most likely approach to lead to a strategic role for HRD in organizations. HRD will only be perceived as having strategic value to the organization if it has the capability to connect the unique value of employee expertise with the strategic goals of the organization (Torraco & Swanson,

1995). While it would be naïve to think that the performance and learning paradigms would ever converge, it is important to realize that there may be much more common ground than has been stated by learning advocates. Further scholarly research and debate is needed to more clearly articulate the common ground as well as the differences.

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